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 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
 INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY Spain

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SUBJECT Background for the Fall of the Giral Government

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1. For some months the political sentiment had been developing which has culminated in the present crisis of the Republican Government. The Socialists and CNT members precipitated the crisis by building up adverse sentiment towards Giral, believing him incapable of achieving a satisfactory end to the Spanish problem.
2. Foreign influences, mainly British, have not been lacking in this position of the Socialists and Conetistas. The propaganda of the BBC contributed to the fall of the Government.
3. It was unfortunate that the crisis came when it did. Three months ago it could have had some effect on the meeting of the UN. Perhaps also it might have been effective two months ago in helping to achieve a positive result from the conversations begun with the British at the time of the visit to Paris on 18 and 19 December of Ernest Davies, Parliamentary Private Secretary to the British Minister of State.
4. The interview with British elements was most important. It was the first time that an officially authorized member of the British Government had approached the Government of the Republic to investigate the possibilities of a solution. The presence of Davies was explained by the course of the conversation:
 - a. The British have no confidence in the monarchist solution.
 - b. The republican elements of the Interior of Spain have little personal authority, and they do not represent the authentic opposition parties, whose leaders in general are in exile.
 - c. Therefore, the British were approaching exiled personalities, and specifically the Republican Government, which in their judgment was the most extensive democratic coalition and the force which could serve as the nucleus of a concentration of anti-Franco forces to embrace even the rightist sectors.

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5. Giral assured Davies that he was disposed to collaborate with monarchists and generals of anti-Franco tendency and whatever neutral persons they desired. He added that if he himself, in the judgment of the British, was a deterrent to the attainment of the solution, they had only to tell him so and he would resign, for he remained at the head of the Government only as a patriotic duty and because he saw, at the moment, no better solution.
6. Davies answered that this was not the case, but that those statements of Giral would create a good impression in Great Britain. He invited Giral to visit London for a conference with the Minister of State, Hector McNeill, who is in charge of Spanish affairs as deputy of Bevin, adding that eventually he might have an interview with Bevin himself, depending on what the latter said on his return from the United States. The first part of January. Davies inquired if Giral could come to London on 12 January. Giral asked that the date be postponed since the Republican Government virtually had entered a crisis.
7. It appears, therefore, that precipitation of the crisis was inopportune as regards the time element, and that it could and should have awaited the conclusion by Giral in London of the conversation begun in Paris. But the unpopularity of Giral was already a reality, translated into slogans such as "Neither the British nor the Interior of Spain likes Giral". There was thus created a sort of hostile atmosphere which produced a political fact.
8. The elements active against Giral were the following: The Socialists and Conetistas who participated in the Government, as well as certain more or less wavering elements of various political organizations in the Interior, mainly the Socialists, Conetistas and one sector of Republicans, comprising the Interior ANPD, plus the Consell Nacional de Catalunya. Also in the Interior the liberal elements of various kinds must at least be mentioned, such as Cid, agrarian; Rafael Guerra del Rio, Conservative Republican; Filiberto Villalobos Gonzalez, Republican; Manuel Jimenez Fernandez, Christian Democrat; and others who had been ministers in the various Republican cabinets. British propaganda, by means of broadcasting or through her agents, mainly in Madrid, had reached the point of proposing a coalition government of rightists and leftists, indicating that the Government of Giral was not representative.
9. Once the Socialists and Conetistas had abandoned Giral, the only possibility remaining to him was to form a completely republican government, without the working masses, without the trade-union organizations, and unconnected with the Interior forces which would not follow it. However, the republican forces seemed to be allied to Communism. Thus there was no other solution than to give to the Socialists the task of forming a government since it was they who precipitated the crisis and therefore they who should be entrusted with the responsibility resulting from it.
10. According to the Socialists, the problem is one of tactics, always maintaining the Republican Institutions without compromise and proclaiming allegiance to the Republic. To this point, the crisis resembles a normal crisis of any democratic regime. The Government is following the same program as previously, with more efficacious tactics, and above all in a way more in accord with the state of mind in the Interior.
11. The attitude of the Basques and Catalans has always been to try to get the largest coalition of democratic forces into the Government. Therefore, they withheld support from Barcia because he did not have the confidence of the Socialists. Their support of the Socialist leadership is conditioned on Llopi's calling on all political factions without exception. This it seems Llopi is disposed to do, judging by the conferences that have been held to date.

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12. The Socialist Government, made up as it appears it will be of all democratic elements without exception, can pursue a line closer to that of the Interior groups than did that of Giral. Perhaps they will get more sympathy from the British Government and avoid the effects of the propaganda that had accumulated against the previous Government.
13. If this government of Socialist tendency can manage to take over from Franco, it will take a popular vote in the country, possibly in elections, possibly in a plebiscite after the setting up of a full coalition of all anti-Franco elements. If the Government cannot do this, it will be necessary to take steps to another solution. The Socialists have obligated themselves to leave the Republican Institutions outside of any compromise, to serve as a rallying point for whatever election or plebiscite can be offered.

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